

Slighe nan



Gaidheal

Washington's Gaelic language  
and cultural society

Seirm

Gaelic Music and Song Circle

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# Introductions

## Seumas Gagne

- ★ Conductor and Artistic Director since inception
- ★ Member of the Board of Directors of Slighe nan Gaidheal since inception
- ★ Instructor and performer and Big Sky Folk Harp Festival 2005 and 2007
- ★ Instructor for Dusty Strings Folk Harp Symposium 2003 and 2005
- ★ Holder of Green Card for fluency in Scottish Gaelic from An Commun Gaidhealach, Scotland
- ★ Winner of Elspeth Hyllestad Trophy for Solo Clàrsach performance, Royal Scottish National Mòd, Inverness Scotland (1997)
- ★ Founding member of traditional Irish/Scottish band, Wicked Celts
- ★ Holder of Bachelor of Fine Arts in Music degree cum laude from Cornish College of the Arts (1988)

## Penny McLeod DeGraff

- ★ Member of Seirm since Seirm's second year (1997-98 season)
- ★ Seirm Site Liaison since 2001
- ★ Alto Section Leader
- ★ Member of the Board of Directors since 2002
- ★ Vice President, 2002-2004
- ★ President, 2004-2005
- ★ Chair of Awards Committee
- ★ Alexander MacRae Memorial Award recipient, 2002
- ★ Founding member of traditional Scottish band, Oran nan Car
- ★ Winner of Ladies Fluent Solo Singing Awards: Mrs. R.A. MacDonald Memorial Trophy, Own Choice; Alex M. Reid Memorial Trophy, Aggregate; and Ladies
- ★ Fluent Aggregate Award for Highest Marks in Gaelic, Mod Vancouver (2007)
- ★ Private Piano Instructor
- ★ Instructor of Piano and Music Theory, Seattle Pacific University
- ★ Instructor of Sightreading, Western Washington University
- ★ Master of Arts in Music Theory, University of Washington
- ★ Bachelor of Arts in Piano Performance, Seattle Pacific University
- ★ Féis Songbook Editor 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008

## About Scottish Gaelic

Scottish Gaelic is one of the six Celtic languages which survived into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the others being Irish Gaelic, Manx Gaelg, Welsh, Breton and Cornish. Approximately 80,000 native speakers live in the Outer Hebrides and Highlands of Scotland, as well as a small community of native speakers in Nova Scotia. There are also approximately 50,000 adult learners of the language worldwide. The language has been in decline for over 200 years and is currently undergoing a significant revival, both in Scotland and abroad.

Scottish Gaelic has been a spoken language in the United States for its entire history. There were Gaelic speaking communities in North Carolina up through the 1950s. Gaelic was also spoken by some Inuit communities, having been brought there by missionaries from the Scottish Highlands.

## Overview of Slighe nan Gaidheal

Slighe nan Gaidheal was founded in April of 1997 to support the Scottish Gaelic language community that had been forming over the previous three years in Seattle, Washington.

The purpose of Slighe nan Gaidheal is to teach and disseminate to the general public the Scottish Gaelic language through classes, performances, workshops, encouragement of its routine use and otherwise.

Slighe nan Gaidheal produces Seirm, the Zero to Gaelic program, Féis Shiàtail, and various other cultural events.

Benefits of membership:

- ★ Eligibility to participate in Seirm
- ★ Quarterly newsletter, Am Bradan Fiosa
- ★ Discounts to Slighe nan Gaidheal events
- ★ Membership card

Cost of membership

- ★ Individual: \$30
- ★ Family: \$40
- ★ Silver (6 years) \$125
- ★ Gold (12 years) \$250

Membership year: Nov 1<sup>st</sup> to Oct 31<sup>st</sup>

# How Seirm Relates to Slighe nan Gaidheal

Seirm is a sub-group of Slighe nan Gaidheal. The Seirm committee chairpeople report to the Board of Directors on Seirm's activities and plans, prepares and submits our annual sub-budget for approval and answers any questions the board may have about the program.

Slighe nan Gaidheal provides funding, and the services and resources of the Communications Committee and Development Committee so that Seirm can rent rehearsal and performances spaces and publicize its activities. Funds received by Seirm in the form of dues, ticket sales and concessions at ceilidhs remain in the Seirm sub-budget until the end of the fiscal year (Dec 31<sup>st</sup>) at which time they are swept back into the overall budget for the organization.

The annual sub-budget usually includes funds for cast parties and potentially other recreational activities to recognize the valuable publicity gained by Slighe nan Gaidheal from the group's performances, as well as to appreciate all our work as singers and musicians.

The Seirm Committee is composed of the following volunteer positions:

- ★ Co-Artistic Directors
- ★ Site Liaison
- ★ Publicity and Advertising Coordinator

The purpose of the committee is to coordinate the planning and accomplishment of all scheduled activities of the group. The committee usually meets informally during breaks in regular rehearsals.

## Seirm Member and Committee Job Descriptions

### Member

#### Duties

- 1) Have a good time
- 2) Be on time and prepared
- 3) Attend **most** rehearsals and **all** performances as presented on the season schedule
- 4) Attend as many of the summer outreach appearances as possible
- 5) Work together as a team with other Seirm members
- 6) In the event that you are unable to attend a rehearsal:
  - ★ Contact a co-Artistic Director beforehand and inform her or him
  - ★ Learn new music prior to the next rehearsal
- 7) Assist with the distribution of advertising pieces in cooperation with the Advertising and Publicity Coordinator
- 8) Assist with the sale of tickets to performances

9) Provide own performance attire as follows:

- ★ Solid color (non-white) shirt with long sleeves and collar
- ★ Men: Kilt or black slacks
- ★ Women: Knee or floor length tartan or black skirt
- ★ Black dress shoes

### Qualifications

1. Passionate interest in Scottish Gaelic language and music
2. One of the following:
  - ★ Ability to learn and sing Scottish Gaelic songs in tune
  - ★ Ability to play the melodies of Scottish Gaelic songs and dance tunes at an intermediate level on a tradition-appropriate instrument

## Artistic Director

### Duties:

1. All duties of a Member
2. Attend all Seirm Committee meetings
3. Make artistic decisions in consensus with other co-Artistic Director
4. Select supplemental repertoire
5. Select any solo performers from within or without the Seirm as needed
6. Conduct rehearsals as needed

### Qualifications

1. 5-10 years experience successfully conducting community musical groups
2. Bachelors Degree in music or equivalent training and experience
3. Fluency in Scottish Gaelic
4. Familiarity with Scottish Gaelic song literature and culture

## Site Liaison

### Duties:

1. All duties of a Member
2. Research and recommend rehearsal space
3. Research and recommend performance spaces
4. Facilitate the execution of any necessary contracts between the site and the Board of Directors
5. Maintain contact with site representatives as necessary

## Qualifications

1. Excellent written and verbal communication skills
2. Ability to manage tasks to completion as part of the Seirm committee

## Compensation

One pair of complementary tickets to each Seirm event

## Publicity and Advertising Coordinator

### Duties

1. All duties of a Member
2. Attend all Seirm Committee meetings
3. Plan advertising and publicity to support the scheduled season performances
4. Recruit any necessary assistance and coordinate the distribution of flyers, brochures, posters or other advertising pieces
5. Function as first point of contact for any media representatives
6. Provide information about upcoming Seirm performances to community calendars as necessary.

## Qualifications

1. Exceptional written and verbal communication skills
2. Ability to manage tasks to completion as part of the Seirm committee
3. Experience performing outreach to media contact and the general public

## Compensation

One pair of complementary tickets to each Seirm performance

## Dues

In addition to membership in Slighe nan Gaidheal, Seirm will be charging members a small fee to participate. The amount will be \$25 for the whole season. These funds will be used to offset the costs of renting rehearsal and performance space, advertising and copying music.

## Music Sources

Seirm uses the excellent songbooks produced for Féis Shiàtail in 2002, 2004, 2006 and 2008. Instrumentalists also supplement their dance music with pieces from The Scottish Ceilidh Collection for Fiddle, Volumes 1 and 2. Songbooks are available for purchase from our web site at [www.slighe.com/seirm](http://www.slighe.com/seirm) or by prior arrangement at rehearsals. The supplemental tune book is available from Amazon.com via a link on the Seirm pages of our web site at [www.slighe.com/seirm](http://www.slighe.com/seirm).